

**From:** CLK Council Info  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 28, 2015 5:10 PM

**Subject:** Budget Speaker Registration/Testimony

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## ~~Speaker Registration~~ Testimony

All fields marked "(\*)" are required and must be completed in order for this form to be valid.

Note: Registrations are not accepted prior to the agendas being posted.

**Name(\*)** Patti Almirez  
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**Meeting Date (\*)** 2015-06-03  
**Council/PH Committee (\*)** Budget Bill 13  
**Agenda Item (\*)** A Grant in Aid (for District 1) for \$12,500 has been programmed for Assets School  
**Your position on the matter (\*)** Support  
**Representing (\*)** Self  
**Organization**  
**Do you wish to speak at the hearing? (\*)** No

### Written Testimony

I strongly support the Grant in Aid (for District 1) for \$12,500 that has been programmed for Assets School. This support will provide much needed value resources for children with learning differences on the Leeward side of Oahu. Proper intervention is critical to the success of these children. Assets School is well respected and has the expertise and knowledge to help children with learning differences to thrive and become successful in school and in life. Assets also has proven techniques to educate teachers in better identifying students with learning differences and to provide the crucial help needed for these students. The National Institute of Child Health and Development estimates that 60 to 80 percent of the 2.5 million school children currently being treated for learning disabilities have dyslexia. In Hawaii, the Department of Education estimates that nearly 30,000 students each year could be eligible for special education services. This suggests a conservative estimate of 15,000-20,000 dyslexics in Hawaii's schools each year. Though the numbers may be blurry, the message is clear: thousands of Hawaii's school children

are suffering from dyslexia, an inherited, language-based disorder that deeply affects their ability to learn to read --- and read to learn. There is no cure because dyslexia is not an illness. But, if not addressed, the children with dyslexia who grow up to be adults with dyslexia will suffer severe consequences along the way. Reading is a critical skill for success in school and in society. According to the International Dyslexia Association people who are functionally illiterate represent: o 85% of the juveniles who appear in court o 60% of prison inmates o 75% of the unemployed. Reading is not only the academic skill that lays the foundation for all subsequent learning; it is also the key to participating fully in society. Further research shows that there is a disproportionately high rate of youth with undiagnosed learning differences who end up entering the juvenile justice system. According to the Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA), the following is true: o Up to 36% of youth in correctional facilities have specific learning differences. o Between 20 to 50% of incarcerated youth are estimated to have ADHD. o Between 1993 and 1997 the number of youth with disabilities of any kind in correctional facilities increased by 28%. o Youth with learning disabilities were more than twice as likely to commit a delinquent offense as their non-disabled peers. o Students with learning disabilities were 3.9 times more likely to be arrested while enrolled in school than non-disabled students. Parents tell us the struggles they have experienced understanding and coming to terms with their children's learning disabilities. They tell stories of bright children robbed of self-esteem because their needs are neither recognized nor understood in classrooms where even good teachers without special training fall short because they do not understand what the dyslexic student needs. If not addressed, children with dyslexia struggle to learn in school, experience failure, and are far more likely to "drop out" later in their school careers. This is especially striking considering that most dyslexics test average or above-average in intelligence tests.

**Testimony  
Attachment**

**Accept Terms and  
Conditions (\*)**

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